



COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES PROCEDURE REGCOUNSEL FINANCIAL SERVICES B.V.

December 2021

1 Definitions

In this Procedure the following expressions shall have the following meaning:

Client: the client of the firm or his representative submitting a complaint;

Committee Proceedings: the manner in which the Disputes Committee processes complaints between solicitors and their clients;

Complaint officer: the representative of the firm to whom complaints may be submitted;

Complaint procedure: this procedure, being the manner in which the firm proposes to settle complaints and disputes;

Complaint: every reasonably qualifying verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction about the existence of a mandate agreement to render services, about the services rendered or about the fees and/or costs charged to a client;

Disputes Committee: the complaints committee for solicitors (*Geschillencommissie Advocatuur Zakelijk*) where the Client can submit unsettled invoices or where disputes about the quality of services or the costs therefor can be submitted if the proposal for amicable settlement of the firm does not result into a satisfactory outcome;

Disputes Regulation: the regulation of the Disputes Committee (*Reglement Geschillencommissie Advocatuur Zakelijk*) setting forth the proceedings of the Disputes Committee.

2 Objectives

The objectives of this Complaints and Disputes Regulation are:

- (a) To establish a process to address complaints of clients within a reasonable period and in a constructive manner.
- (b) Processing records about the causes of complaints.
- (c) Retention and improvement of existing relationships with clients.
- (d) Train associates to address in a client orientated manner when complaints are submitted.
- (e) To improve the quality of the services from the firm by addressing and analyzing complaints.

3 Informing clients

A solicitor:

- (a) Informs clients that the firm maintains a complaints and dispute procedure
- (b) Informs the client that in the event the complaints are not addressed in a satisfactory manner, the client is authorised to commence proceedings with the Disputes Committee.
- (c) Informs the client that a copy of the Disputes Regulation may be obtained from the secretary of the Disputes Committee at PO Box 90600, 2509 LP The Hague, the Netherlands.

4 Internal complaints procedure

- (a) If a client submits to the firm a complaint, the firm is obliged to inform the solicitor dealing with the relevant matter about the complaint.
- (b) The solicitor dealing with the matter uses best efforts to resolve the complaint taking into account this procedure. The Complaints officer may be consulted.
- (c) The confidentiality of the information must be upheld at all times.
- (d) The client is notified about the outcome of the process dealing with the complaint.
- (e) If the complaint is not resolved in a satisfactory manner, the dispute will be submitted to the Disputes Committee.

5 Complaints registration and analysis

- (a) All complaints are recorded in writing specifying the nature of the complaint, the client concerned and



the solicitors concerned and the manner in which the complaint has been addressed.

- (b) All complaints are evaluated once a year and from the analysis the lessons learnt are recorded and communicated within the firm.

6 Choice of forum

- (a) If complaints and disputes originating therefrom cannot be resolved following the internal complaints and disputes procedure of the firm, the complaint or dispute may be submitted to the Disputes Committee.
- (b) The Disputes Committee will address the complaint or resolve the dispute originating therefrom in accordance with the Disputes Regulation.
- (c) In principle, disputes will be resolved by means of arbitration applying the rules and procedures of the Disputes Regulation, unless the client and the firm agree to the application of other rules and procedures.
- (d) Private individuals retain the right to submit their complaint and dispute to the ordinary civil law courts.
- (e) This forum choice and the rules set forth herein do not restrict the right and authority of clients to submit complaints to the professional conduct proceedings in accordance with the Solicitors Act (*Advocatenwet*) and the rules adopted by the Bar Association of the Netherlands.
